



The Negev Forum Regional Cooperation Framework Adopted by the Steering Committee on November 10th, 2022

The historic, inaugural Negev Summit that took place at Sde Boker, Israel on March 27-28, 2022, with the participation of the Foreign Ministers of the Arab Republic of Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, the Kingdom of Bahrain, the Kingdom of Morocco, the United States of America and hosted by the State of Israel, sent a strong message of peace based on principles of dialogue, coexistence, and mutual respect. It created a unique opportunity to build a new regional network enabling broad cooperation in a variety of fields of common interest.

The Participants at the Negev Summit expressed their shared vision for the region and its future generations. They recognized the potential to build genuine networks of cooperation to advance common interests, regional stability and prosperity in the Middle East, demonstrating what can be achieved by working together, collectively, to achieve tangible results, overcome shared challenges and take advantage of opportunities for all the people of the region. They reiterated the need to expand their cooperative efforts to confront terrorism and extremism, and advance security, prosperity, and peace for the region and all of its inhabitants. The Participants also affirmed that these relations can be harnessed to create momentum in Israeli-Palestinian relations, towards a negotiated resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and as part of efforts to achieve a just, lasting and comprehensive peace.

In light of the extraordinary opportunity and momentum created by the Negev Summit, the Arab Republic of Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, the Kingdom of Bahrain, the Kingdom of Morocco, the United States of America, and the State of Israel, (hereinafter: “the members”) expressed their intention at the Summit to form a regional framework (hereinafter: “the Negev Forum” or “the Forum”), with the following core objectives:

- To enhance regional prosperity and stability by promoting greater political, economic, and people-to-people cooperation among the members;
- To generate new, sustainable economic opportunities that help alleviate poverty and reduce the development gap between the members, as well as develop and implement initiatives that strengthen the Palestinian economy and improve the quality of life of the Palestinian people;

- To empower the people of the region by improving educational outcomes and helping ensure equitable access to human development opportunities;
- To promote sustainable development that protects the region's environment, the quality of life of its people, their standard of living, and addresses the global climate crisis;
- To improve the resilience of regional food and water resources by bolstering supply chains and implementing sustainable management practices;
- To enhance regional stability by supporting cooperation among members;
- To promote understanding and coexistence by celebrating the diverse cultural and religious heritage of the people of the region; and
- To proactively engage partners in the region to enhance the impact of Negev Forum initiatives, with the possibility of widening the Forum to include additional members, and promote a regional network of cooperation that is open, effective, transparent, and inclusive.

The members convened in Manama, Bahrain on June 27, 2022, and decided upon a four- part structure to advance the core objectives of the Forum and serve as a platform for regional cooperation:

- **The Annual Ministerial:** The Ministerial is an annual meeting of the members at the foreign minister level. The Ministerial is intended to serve as the principal guiding and deliberative body of the Forum developing a common vision for the Forum and setting its annual agenda, consistent with the core objectives of the Forum.

The Ministerial is intended to convene once a year, ideally in a desert location hosted by one of the members, on a rotating basis. The Ministerial should be presided over by the hosting member as the Negev Forum President. All initiatives of the Ministerial, including the admission of new members, should be decided by consensus.

It is envisioned that the annual Ministerial maintain the original unique structure of the Negev Summit and include an informal Ministerial-only dinner, a corresponding senior staff dinner, a multilateral plenary meeting of all members, and host all delegates at a single location allowing for bilateral meetings and informal networking opportunities.

- **The Presidency:** The Ministerial host is expected to serve as President of the Negev Forum until the next Ministerial meeting. The President is expected to reach decisions by consensus with other members and a leadership role in developing the agenda of the Negev Forum Ministerial.
- **The Steering Committee:** The Steering Committee is expected to coordinate the work of the Forum and its Working Groups, based on the direction of the Ministerial. The Steering Committee is expected to be comprised of senior officials of the foreign

ministries of the members and to reach its decisions by consensus. The Steering Committee is expected to be headed by the Presidency of the Negev Forum and should meet at least twice a year.

The functions of the Steering Committee include:

- Forming Working Groups at the direction of the Ministerial and selecting Working Group Chairs;
 - Coordinating the Negev Forum processes and Working Groups as needed, including by reviewing and approving the reports of the Working Groups;
 - Assisting in preparations for the Ministerial, including setting the agenda, reviewing the implementation of the Ministerial decisions, and reporting on progress made by the Working Groups;
 - Establishing consensus on possible additional members or observers and extending invitations accordingly.
- **The Working Groups:** The Working Groups are expected to advance initiatives and projects in furtherance of the core objectives of the Forum. The Working Groups are expected to include relevant senior officials and experts from the members and to meet at least three times a year, with at least one in-person meeting. Working Group Chairs, selected by the Steering Committee, take the lead in developing the agenda of their respective Working Groups. The Working Groups are expected to report to the Steering Committee after each meeting. Non-members, including regional partners, stakeholders or those with specific and relevant expertise, may be added to Working Groups where beneficial, with the consensus of members and at the invitation of the Working Group Chair. Recommendations of the Working Groups should be reached by consensus.

In this regard, it is recalled that during the Negev Summit, the members decided to establish the following Working Groups:

- **Food Security and Water Technology** - Promoting projects that harness existing methods and technologies and develop new approaches to improving food security and water technology.
- **Clean Energy** - Advancing clean energy projects, sharing best practices, and developing policies that promote and unlock the clean energy potential of the region.
- **Tourism** - Promoting joint tourism projects that boost economic development, deepen touristic links, and enhance people-to-people ties among members.
- **Healthcare** – Building medical and public health capacity to improve outcomes and access for the people of members.

- **Education and Co-existence** - Expanding cooperation in the fields of education, including through technology, knowledge exchanges, and joint projects that improve educational outcomes and access to human development opportunities, as well as prevent extremism and promote co-existence and cross-cultural understanding. Strategic communication is expected to be integral to this Working Group.
- **Regional Security** - Promoting regional stability and security at the policy and strategic levels, in coordination with relevant initiatives, including through enhanced cooperation, training, capacity building and other efforts that advance a coordinated regional security approach.

Nothing in this arrangement is intended to give rise to any rights or obligations under domestic or international law.